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SUBJECT: PAKISTAN MEDIA REACTION: NOVEMBER 19, 2008

SUMMARY: All newspapers ran as their lead story reports on "Operation Lionheart" launched by the U.S. military "in coordination with Pakistani forces to put pressure on insurgents on both sides of Afghan border." Newspapers also widely covered the Center for American Progress calling for a "dramatic strategic shift in the U.S. policy towards Pakistan." The honoring of the deposed Chief Justice Chaudhry by the New York City Bar Association "in recognition of his efforts to uphold the rule of law" also received prominent front page coverage in all newspapers.

Most major English language dailies ran editorials on the recently-concluded Friends of Democratic Pakistan meeting in Abu Dhabi while the Urdu language dailies chose to comment on the elections in Indian-held Kashmir. The center-right Urdu daily "Pakistan" noted that "what could be the credibility of an election where voters were forced to vote and popular leadership was detained?" Another liberal Urdu daily, "Express" observed that "it is very strange that some major powers, especially the U.S., Europe and human rights NGOs, are always ready to monitor elections in Pakistan and other developing countries yet all remained silent on the Indian forces treatment of the Kashmiris on election day." The centrist English daily, "The News," in its editorial on the Friends of Pakistan meeting noted that "rather than hoping that the Obama administration will deliver financial assistance, Pakistan's managers must devise strategy to conserve and better manage their own resources." Another English daily, "Dawn," wrote: "Pakistan will remain dependent on external inflows, which means it must pay attention to the reasons its friends and allies are so reluctant to pour money into the country." End Summary

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News Stories  
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[1](#)1. "U.S. Commander Says Pakistan Backed Raid" "Dawn" (11/19)

"The U.S. military has launched a coordinated operation with Pakistani forces to put pressure on insurgents on both sides of Afghanistan's wild eastern frontier, a U.S. military commander said on Tuesday. Dubbed "Operation Lionheart," the operation takes cooperation between U.S., Afghan and Pakistani forces to "the next level" in terms of intelligence sharing and coordination, said Colonel John Spiszer."

[1](#)2. "Obama Urged To Build Partnership with Pakistan" "Dawn" (11/19)

"The incoming Obama administration has been advised to bring a "dramatic strategic shift" in U.S. policy towards Pakistan, moving away from knee-jerk reactions to security threats to building a 'partnership for progress' with the South Asian nation. The new approach, proposed by a think-tank headed by Barack Obama's chief adviser, also seeks greater U.S. involvement in resolving regional disputes."

¶3. "NY Bar Confers Its Highest Honor on Deposed CJP " "The Post" (11/19)

"One of the world's largest bar associations has conferred its honorary membership on Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhary the deposed chief justice of the Supreme Court, at a solemn ceremony in the United States."

¶4. "Pak for End to Predators' Attacks" "The Nation" (11/19)

"The U.S. repudiation to transfer predator aircraft technology to Pakistan has driven the PPP-led coalition government to take steps in balancing out the role of the Tripartite Commission to bring an end to the predators' attacks in Pakistan's territory. Well-informed sources told "The Nation" on Tuesday that the government was striving to seek remedial measures through Tripartite Commission that includes ISAF, Pakistan and Afghanistan to help stop predators attacks in Pakistani territory."

¶5. "ISAF, ISPR Come Up With Differing Versions" "Dawn" (11/19)

"International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and Pakistan's military have come up with differing versions of an incident which took place on Sunday following an attack on ISAF post by insurgents. A day after a press statement was issued by ISAF, a spokesman of Pakistan's military said the ISAF had engaged the fleeing militants

on the Afghan side of the border and informed a Pakistani post on the Pakistan-Afghan border."

¶6. "Three Kidnapped Tribal Elders Escape" "Dawn" (11/19)

"Three tribal elders, who had been kidnapped on Monday, escaped from a militants' hideout in Damadola on Tuesday."

¶7. "15 Militants, Soldier Killed In Swat" "The News" (11/19)

"Fifteen militants were killed and several others sustained injuries in the ongoing military operation in the restive Swat Valley on Tuesday. Gunship helicopters shelled alleged hideouts of militants in Akhund and Zora Kellay in Kabal Tehsil, leaving seven militants dead and several others, including civilians, injured."

¶8. "NWFP Govt asks Taliban to lay down arms for talks" "Daily Times" (11/19)

"The NWFP government on Tuesday set lying down of weapons as the foremost condition for peace talks with the Swat-based Taliban, official sources told Daily Times. The condition was presented before members of a Kanjoo Peace Jirga, who met members of the NWFP Assembly from Swat district at the Frontier House to discuss a possible truce in the valley."

¶9. "Taliban Leadership Divided Over Attacks Inside Pakistan" "The News" (11/19)

"Differences in the leadership of the Taliban militants operating in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and the NWFP have deepened, one of the commanders of local Taliban told The News on Tuesday. "There are many reasons of differences in the Taliban leadership," said the commander, who wished not to be identified. "The most serious difference between the Baitullah Mehsud and Maulvi Nazir groups of local Taliban is over suicide bombings in Pakistan," he added."

¶10. "Five Militants Killed In Shabqadar" "The News" (11/19)

"Five militants were killed, while nine persons, including five militants, sustained injuries during a gun battle in Mian Kellay of Shabqadar Tehsil on Tuesday."

¶11. "Attacks Halt WFP Wheat Supply to Afghanistan" "The News" (11/19)

"The World Food Program (WFP) has suspended the supply of wheat to Afghanistan due to security situation and looting of trucks carrying food items to the war torn country. Two ships anchored at the

Karachi port are in the process of unloading about 50,000 tons of wheat. Two to three thousand tons of wheat reaches Afghanistan through Pakistan by trucks daily through Khyber agency in the NWFP and Chaman in Balochistan."

¶12. "Varsity student among would be suicide bomber?" "The News" (11/19)

"One in three would be suicide bomber tasked to hit their targets in Peshawar is believed to be a final year student at University of Peshawar, a senior police official disclosed to 'The News' that they had received a tip from intelligence agencies that three suicide bomber are tasked to hit their targets especially police establishment in the provincial capital. Two of them are said to be from Mohmmmand agency while the third one hails from Karachi."

¶13. "COAS Leaves For Brussels" "The Post" (11/19)

"Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Ashfaq Pervez Kayani, and Tuesday left for Brussels on a three-day official visit. General Kayani would participate in the meeting of Chiefs of Defense (CHODS) for discussion on prevailing security situation in the region"

¶14. "Iran seeks changes in IPI pipeline pact" "The Post" (11/19)

"In a new twist to negotiations on the much-delayed Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) pipeline project, Tehran wants legal immunity in case of armed conflict disrupting natural gas supplies through the proposed line."

¶15. "IHC Disposes Of Plea for Taking Aafia Case to ICJ" "Daily Times" (11/19)

"The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday disposed of a writ petition seeking its direction to the government to take the issue of Dr. Aafia Siddiqui's detention by the U.S. authorities to the International Court of Justice (ICJ). A single member bench of the IHC, consisting of Chief Justice Sardar Muhammad Aslam, in its short order observed that a case for the repatriation of Dr. Aafia was already pending before the court so there was no need to file a fresh petition on the same issue."

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Editorials/Op-eds  
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¶16. "Election Farce in Occupied Kashmir" an editorial in the center-right Urdu daily "Pakistan" (cir. 10,000) (11/19)

"The election farce was reenacted in the Indian-held Kashmir once again with the entire valley appeared to be under curfew. Majority of the people kept a distance from the drama. What could be the credibility of an election where voters were forced to vote and popular leadership was detained? India should recognize that Kashmiris want freedom instead of elections."

¶17. "Failure of Election Farce in Occupied Kashmir" an editorial in the liberal Urdu daily "Express" (cir. 25,000) (11/19)

"The first phase of the Indian government's election farce in the Occupied Kashmir has failed as the Kashmiris rejected the polls. It is very strange that some major powers, especially the U.S., Europe and human rights NGOs which always remain vigilant to monitor elections in Pakistan and other developing countries, remained silent on the Indian forces' treatment of the Kashmiris on Election Day."

¶18. "Another Farce Election In Indian-Held Kashmir," an editorial in the Karachi-based, pro Taliban Jihadi Urdu daily "Islam" (cir. 15,000) (11/19)

"India wants to send a message to the international community through the sham elections in the Indian-held Kashmir that it has granted all democratic rights to the Kashmiri people, and that situation in the troubled-state has come to normalcy. India is also seeking to normalize ties with Pakistan through boosting bilateral trade and commerce. Now it is Pakistan's job to thwart the nefarious Indian designs on Kashmir, and support the freedom

movement there and force India to resolve this issue without delay."

¶19. "Friendly Advice," an editorial in the centrist national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (11/19)

"... Given the humiliating situation we face now, Pakistan's priorities must be to put its own house in order, so that it can extract maximum benefit from the attempts that will be made by members of the Friends forum to encourage investment within it. Rather than hoping that the Obama administration will deliver financial assistance, Pakistan's managers must devise strategy to conserve and better manage their own resources...."

¶20. "Not So Friendly," an editorial in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (11/19)

"Expectations were low before the Friends of Democratic Pakistan Group met in Abu Dhabi and the meeting has done nothing to raise them. Pakistan will remain dependent on external inflows, which means it must pay attention to the reasons its friends and allies are so reluctant to pour money into the country."

¶21. "Friends in Need," "an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English daily "The Post" (cir. 5,000) (11/19)

"The lukewarm fashion with which the group of countries, dubbed as Friends of Pakistan, took up the cause of providing economic shelter to Islamabad at its much awaited first meeting in Abu Dhabi on Monday, must have taken much wind out of the hype created by the PPP government about a comprehensive package of financial assistance to be delivered to us promptly, and which would bring an immediate

relief to people braving horrible inflationary conditions. The cool manner in which the meeting was held amply explains our almost crumpled foreign policy and lack of confidence in the new faces in power which seem to have put the country low on priority even by what are considered as our closest friends who, strangely insisted Islamabad to first bow down to IMF's harsh conditions before looking at them for financial assistance...."

¶22. "Disappointing Friends of Pakistan," an editorial in the Islamabad-based rightist English daily "Pakistan Observer" (cir. 5,000) (11/19)

"The much-awaited and much-talked-about first formal meeting of the newly created forum of "Friends of Pakistan", held in Abu Dhabi, has turned out to be an utter disappointment. Pakistani officials, who attended the meeting are trying to convey an impression that it was highly successful, from their point of view, but the fact remains that the meeting proved to be a non-event, as it produced nothing tangible for the country except vague expressions of support in four critical areas of development, security, energy and institution building."

¶23. "Critical to U.S. Security?," an editorial in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (11/19)

"While American President-elect Barack Obama's statement, that he would order a quick drawdown of troops from Iraq as soon as he formally occupies the White House on January 20, makes good sense, his view that Osama bin Laden is "critical" to U.S. security is open to question, to say the least. Mr. Bin Laden, if still alive, is, as any strategist would have realized by now, barely a titular head of Al-Qaeda and his removal from the scene would hardly make a difference. Not only that, Al-Qaeda has become more or less a mythical concept, with so many disparate militant outfits, led by their own commanders, carrying out its mission whose immediate focus is the vacation of Muslim lands by foreign forces. They are all conveniently termed as Al-Qaeda or, in the case of Afghanistan, the Taliban. That also puts into question the second part of Mr. Obama's plan of combating terrorism, injecting more troops into the Afghan arena."

¶24. "Obama, Usama and America's Moral Identity" an editorial in the Lahore-based populist center-right Urdu daily "Khabrain" (cir. 50,000) (11/19)

"The current global economic crisis started from the U.S. and spread throughout the world. The possibility of Al Qaeda attacks would be minimized if upon assuming power, Mr. Obama works on his first priority - improving the economy and thus ending the global crisis - rather than withdrawing troops from Iraq and sending them to Afghanistan. Therefore if Mr. Obama actually wants to revive America's moral identity, he needs to pay attention to improving the economy and give up such activities [as increasing troops in Afghanistan and vowing to crush Usama bin Laden]."

¶25. "Vow to Crush Al Qaeda: Obama Walks in Bush Footsteps," an editorial in the second-largest, center-right nationalist Urdu daily "Nawa-i-Waqt" (cir. 125,000) (11/19)

"President-elect Barack Obama's post election statements hinted at worldwide peace being his priority. However, his reiteration to crush Al Qaeda surprised those who hoped to see the world turning into a cradle of peace after his election as the President. His announcements for the closure of Guantanamo Bay torture camp and withdrawal of American troops from Iraq are good, but sticking with Bush policy on Afghanistan is a cause of concern for the world, especially Pakistan."

¶26. "How to End the Conflict in FATA," " an op-ed by Dr. A.Q. Khan in the centrist national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (11/19)

"... Whatever action the government has taken so far in the tribal areas has proved counter-productive. It has sown the seeds of hatred and could very well lead to the country's disintegration. Creating division between tribes by bribing some corrupt leaders is tantamount to following a foreign agenda...."

¶27. "An Open Letter to Obama," an op-ed by Irfan Asghar in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (11/19)

"... The U.S. accuses Pakistan of terrorism and fundamentalism but Mr. President, it was your country that fed the fires of Islamic fundamentalism to defeat the Communism. If you really want to take on terrorism, you will have to eschew the policies of political and economic exploitation of the Muslim societies because this exploitation gives rise to deprivations which, in turn, fan the flames of hatred against your country and make the people trigger-happy. You will have to stop the support of corrupt, authoritarian and unpopular regimes in Muslim societies which your country is doing at the expense of the populace and pull out your forces out of the Muslim lands which the U.S. has entered to occupy their resources."

¶28. "Karzai's Offer to the Taliban," an editorial in the country's premier business newspaper, "Business Recorder" (cir. 25,000) (11/19)

"... Now that the Democrats have won the American presidency, there is the widely held belief that despite President-elect Obama's campaign pledges to beef up U.S. military presence in Afghanistan, his administration would like to revisit President Bush's Afghan policy. Consequently, the new administration is likely to come under increasing pressure with a thrust on exploring the chances of a political solution to the conflict.... Whatever the motive behind Karzai's offer of peace talks to Mullah Omar, taking it on its face value it should be welcomed...."

¶29. "Radicalization of Youth in Pakistan," An Editorial in the Lahore-Based Liberal English Language Daily "Daily Times" (Cir. 10,000) (11/19)

"The fact is that Muslim youth is radicalized by religion all over the Islamic world. And poverty and inequality of opportunity are not specific to Pakistan. Interestingly, though, most of the diagnoses offered for this by Muslims call it "reactive" and blame the U.S. for triggering it. Radicalism in the West sought a forward movement of society at greater speed than society could realistically absorb. But radicalism in the Islamic world seeks a movement back into the pure sharia of the classical period of Islam at a speed that threatens to cut Muslim society off from the modern world and

actually causes it to become hostile to it. Blaming the U.S. brings to mind American action in the Tribal Areas of Pakistan where people stricken by "collateral damage" are daily radicalized by the passion for revenge..."

¶30. "Recovery of Abducted Diplomats - a Challenge," an editorial in the Peshawar-based Urdu-language daily "Mashriq" (cir. 55,000) (11/19)

"The ongoing military operation in Shabqadar (a suburb of Peshawar) is an indication of the onset of militants at the door of the provincial capital. Likewise the reports of possibility of shutting down of foreign missions including U.S., Iranian, and Afghan consulates in Peshawar are also alarming. It is not as much as necessary to term the abductions of the foreign diplomats as a plot to vilify Pakistan; in fact the Government will have to deal with this situation to recover the abducted foreign envoys and to secure the foreign facilities in the province to dispel sense of insecurity in NWFP."

Patterson